

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
HA-05 IO-13 /084 W
-----105036 250602Z /17

R 241818Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3041
INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL PALERMO

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E.O. 11652 N/A
TAGS: UR, IT
SUBJ: L'UNITA CONDEMNS ORLOV TRIAL

1. FOLLOWING AN EMBARRASSING DELAY, NOTED BY IMPORTANT SECTORS OF THE NON-COMMUNIST PRESS, THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCI) DAILY L'UNITA ON MAY 24 FINALLY CARRIED A COMMENTARY (ON THE FIRST PAGE) STRONGLY CRITICIZING THE TRIAL AND CONVICTION OF SOVIET DISSIDENT JURIY ORLOV. THE L'UNITA COMMENTARY WAS WRITTEN BY GIULIANO PROCACCI, A PCI SCHOLAR ON SOVIET DEVELOPMENTS.

2. OBSERVING THAT THERE ARE MANY ITALIANS, COMMUNISTS AND NON-COMMUNIST, WHO HAVE FELT TROUBLED AND OFFENDED BY THE STIFF SENTENCES HANDED DOWN RECENTLY BY SOVIET COURTS AGAINST ORLOV AND OTHER SOVIET DISSIDENTS, PROCACCI NOTES THAT THE MOVE ORLOV IS RATHER GRAVE SINCE QUOTE IT
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APPEARS UNJUSTIFIABLE FOR SEVERAL REASONS: FROM THE RAPDITY OF THE PROCEDURAL DEBATE TO ITS MODALITY (THE FREINDS AND THE SUPPORTERS OF THE ACCUSED WERE NOT ADMITTED INTO THE COURTROOM, WHILE HOSTILE INDIVIDUALS WERE) TO THE DISPROPORTION OF THE PENALTY (SEVEN YEARS OF FORCED LABOR AND FIVE OF EXILE FOR ORLOV) IN RELATION TO THE CRIME, GIVEN THAT IT IS NOT CONCEDED THAT A CRIME TOOK

PLACE. END QUOTE.

3. THE GENERAL THRUST OF THEARTICLE IS THAT TRIALS AGAINST DISSIDENTS ARE NEGATIVE FOR THE IMAGE OF THE USSR AND COULD IMPACT NEGATIVELY ON THE PROCESS OF DETENTE. PROCACCI NOTES THAT QUOTE ONE CAN OBSERVE THAT THE IMAGE A COUNTRY PROJECTS TO THE WORLD OF ITS OWN SOCIAL AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE CONSTITUTES AN IMPORTANT AND POSSIBLY A DECISIVE ELEMENT NOT ONLY FOR ITS INTERNATIONAL PRESTIGE, BUT ALSO FOR ITS OWN CAPACITY TO INFLUENCE WORLD AFFAIRS. THERE DOES NOT EXIST IN THE MODERN WORLDAN ACT OF INTERNAL POLICT THAT IS NOT EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY A FOREIGN POLICY ACT. THIS APPLIES TO ANY STATE. END QUOTE. THE AUTHOR SUGGESTS THAT THE IMAGE OF THE USSR IN THE WORLD WAS HIGHEST IN 1936 AND 1956 WHEN THE SOVIETS WERE ABLE TO PROJECT THEIR SOCIETY AS ONE WHICH WAS RICHER, MORE ARTICULATED AND, MORE FREE IN POLITICAL TERMS. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE LOWEST POINT OF SOVIET INFLUENCE AND PRESTIGE WAS REACHED, ACCORDING TO THE AUTHOR, DURING THE TRIALS AND PURGES ORDERED BY STALIN. PROCACCI CONCLUDES HIS COMMENTARY BY STARTING THAT QUOTE THE VERDICT OF MOSCOW AGAINST ORLOV BY STATING THAT QUOTE THE VERDICT OF MOSCOW AGAINST ORLOV CERTAINLY DOES NOT CONTRIBUTE TO IMPROVE THE PRESENT IMAGE OF THE USSR IN TERMS OF WORLD PUBLIC OPINION. FOR THE REASONS THAT I HAVE ATTEMPTED TO EXPLAIN, I ALSO BELEIVE THAT THEY DO NOT CONTRIBUTE TO THE CAUSE OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DETENTE. END QUOTE.

4. COMMENT. ALTHOUGH THE L'UNITA COMMENTARY IS NOT SIGNED BY A SENIOR PARTY OFFICIAL, ITS PROMINENT PLACEMENT ON THE FIRST PAGE OF L'UNITA GIVESIT SUBSTANTIAL WEIGHT AND SUGGESTS THATIT WAS APPROVED BY THE PARTY LEADERSHIP BEFORE BEING PUBLISHED. ITS TONE IS SUBSTANTIALLY TOUGHER THAN THATUSUALLY RESERVED FOR THE USSR, ALTHOUGH OBSERVERS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY CONTINUE TO ASK WHY IT TOOK THE PCI SO LONG (RELATIVELY) TO ACT.GARDNER

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